



CEPPS/NDI Quarterly Report: April 1 to June 30, 2005

**INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY OF MEXICAN POLITICAL PARTIES: TRAINING
YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS (03840)**

USAID Cooperative Agreement No. DGC-A-00-01-00004-00

Project Dates: April 15, 2003 to August 31, 2005

Total Budget: \$287,475.00 Expenses to date: \$181,131.64

I. SUMMARY

Mexico's political landscape changed dramatically in the aftermath of the country's landmark 2000 elections, the first democratic transfer of presidential power between parties since the nineteenth century. In response, all political parties in Mexico have been undergoing internal reform processes to clarify their platforms, strengthen their membership bases, and redefine their roles in Mexico's new political environment. However, a high voter abstention rate for the 2003 mid-term elections reflects the population's decreased confidence in political parties.

In order to help address this crisis of credibility affecting political parties in Latin America, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI or the Institute) created the Political Party Leadership Program (LP or "the Leadership Program") in 1999. This ongoing initiative is designed to help a select group of emerging political leaders develop the skills necessary to lead more modern and responsive political parties and to address the issue of party renewal. The Leadership Program begins with an intensive, 10-day leadership development seminar and continues in-country with the young leaders as they implement concrete party-strengthening projects. With USAID funding, NDI has been working with eight Mexican 2004 Leadership Program participants to implement party reform projects. NDI assistance includes logistical support, consultations and the sponsorship of expert trainer visits.

The 2005 Leadership Program seminar took place this quarter from April 8 to 17 in Lima, Peru.¹ Prior to the seminar, Mexican LP alumni met with the 2005 participants to offer guidance on implementing Leadership Program projects. 2004 Mexico participant Patricia Flores (National Action Party, PAN) was also recruited to present her project results at the 2005 seminar. NDI media expert Miguel Medina traveled to Mexico in June to train women leaders in the state of Aguascalientes. Results this quarter include the increased ability of women leaders in the state of Aguascalientes to interact with the media and present a clear and concise message, and the exchange of information and lessons learned on project development between Leadership

¹ The Leadership Program Seminar is funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

Program alumni and the 2005 participants. NDI hopes to conduct final project activities with the 2004 LP participants during the next quarter.

II. BACKGROUND

Mexico's political landscape changed dramatically in the aftermath of the landmark 2000 elections. In response, all political parties in Mexico are undergoing internal reform processes to clarify their platforms, strengthen their membership bases, and redefine their roles in Mexico's new political environment. However, a 60 percent voter abstention rate in the 2003 mid-term elections reflects the Mexican people's decreased confidence in political parties.

For the first time since its creation in 1929, the Party of the Institutional Revolution (PRI) is supporting itself without the power of the presidency. Faced with the need to create a more democratic party structure and modern image, it must also confront a rising disunity within the famously hierarchical party. Conflicts have arisen over policy differences as party leaders struggle to balance the competing agendas of reformers and more traditional party bosses. In mid-2002, Roberto Madrazo emerged from the more traditional wing of the party to be elected party president in a closely contested and widely questioned election. Madrazo has since exacerbated divisions within the party by engaging in less than open candidate selection processes for national and state elections, angering the party's powerful state governors.

In the run-up to the 2006 presidential candidate selection process within the PRI, Madrazo leads the polls with 36 percent support. Senate leader Enrique Jackson is in second place with 17 percent, followed by Mexico State governor Arturo Montiel with 15 percent. Other pre-presidential candidates include former Tamaulipas governor Tomás Yarrington, Coahuila governor Enrique Martínez and Hidalgo governor Manuel Ángel Núñez. These five state governors have formed the All United Against Madrazo (*Todos Unidos Contra Madrazo, Tucom*) alliance and will elect one representative – using national polls – to face Madrazo in the party's internal election².

The Party of the Democratic Revolution (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, PRD), the nation's third largest force, has struggled to establish itself as a constructive opposition party. It was formed by breakaway PRI supporters in the aftermath of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1988. After steady growth, this leftist party suffered large losses in the 2000 elections, coming in a distant third in the presidential race and losing 74 of the 126 congressional seats it had won in 1997. The 2003 elections showed the PRD making a comeback, as the party regained 40 seats in the congress (for a total of 90) and swept elections in Mexico City. In the spring of 2005, the PRD mayor of Mexico City, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) was accused of abuse of power in a land dispute and stripped of his immunity by PRI and PAN members of congress. AMLO was never tried in the courts and continues to lead national polls for the 2006 presidential elections.

Since the landmark 2000 elections, the National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, PAN) has faced the challenge of consolidating its transition from an opposition party to one with

² The PRI internal election process consists of a vote by members of the party's National Political Council (CPN). The Council consists of 120 party leaders from various sectors.

control of the presidency, but without a governing majority in congress. New PAN leadership was elected in March 2005 and is now focused on the internal election process to choose a presidential candidate. Beginning in September 2005, the PAN will hold three rounds of primary elections by region (northern, central and southern states), in which all registered party members will be able to vote for their preferred candidate. Candidates include Former Secretary of Government, Santiago Creel, who leads the polls, followed by former Energy Minister Felipe Calderon who represents the party's traditional conservative base.

The Leadership Program in Mexico

NDI launched the Political Party Leadership Program in 1999, a regional program that promotes the modernization and renewal of political parties by strengthening the democratic leadership skills of emerging political leaders and party activists. Following a rigorous selection process, the Leadership Program begins with an intensive, ten-day leadership development seminar and continues in-country with the young leaders as they implement concrete party-strengthening projects.

Using a competitive application process, NDI selects emerging political leaders who range in age from 25 to 35, have at least five years of political experience and a track record of leadership and political activism. Final candidates are selected following a regional committee review and interview process. NDI chooses up to three participants per party, emphasizing a balance in internal party movements, gender, ideologies and key geographical regions. Graduates of the 1999–2004 programs have featured emerging political leaders, including mayors, municipal councilors, legislators, legislative advisors, indigenous political activists and leaders of youth movements, among others. As part of this program, NDI has worked with 47 young leaders from Mexico's three main parties (PRI, PAN and PRD) since 1999. Project results have included increasing the participation of youth in the 2000 elections, developing proposals for internal party reform that were considered by party congresses in 2001, increasing participation of women and youth within the internal structures of the PRI, establishing a PAN youth training scholarship program (*Linceo*) in 2002, and increasing the use of technology tools in PRD campaigns in 2003.

In order to demonstrate their commitment to political parties, the LP participants are required to develop party strengthening projects. These projects are implemented with the support of at least one senior leader within their party. NDI, in turn, draws on its international network of political party activists and materials from the regional Political Party Network (www.ndipartidos.org) to help the young leaders implement their projects.

NDI's overarching goal in this program is to strengthen the Mexican parties' ability to become more accountable to the citizenry by providing political parties and emerging political party leaders with the skills and practical strategies to advance reform and modernization efforts from within, including incorporating transparent, inclusive and accountable procedures.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The 2005 Leadership Program seminar³ took place from April 8 to 17 in Lima, Peru. Prior to the seminar, the NDI-Mexico field office organized an informal meeting between 2005 participants and LP participants from the 1999 to 2004 programs. During the reunion, 2004 LP participant Alma Medina (PAN) presented on how she implemented her project and the final result of creating an association for women municipal officials.

2004 Leadership Program

Eight emerging leaders from the three largest parties in Mexico (three each from the PRI and the PAN and two from the PRD) participated in the 2004 Leadership Program. Through its field office in Mexico City, NDI meets regularly with LP participants to discuss and offer feedback on their party reform projects and organize follow-on activities with technical assistance trainers.

Below please find brief summaries of recent activities:

Patricia Flores (PAN), a federal congresswoman, proposed to improve communication between the PAN parliamentary group and constituents by considering methods for direct communication and increasing the consistency of the message delivered by the parliamentary group. Since attending the LP seminar, Congresswoman Flores has designed and implemented creative mechanisms for direct communication with her constituents. Instead of renting a local office, Flores has opted instead for a mobile office (a van) which she uses to meet with constituents throughout her district. In designing constituent outreach initiatives, Flores has consulted with NDI communications expert Pedro Silva. With his assistance, Flores created a database to record and track constituent contacts, requests and information.

Flores presented project results and the use of new ideas and technology to improve constituent relations at the 2005 LP seminar in Lima, Peru.



Women municipal leaders in the state of Aguascalientes practice their media skills with NDI trainer Miguel Medina.

Alma Medina Macias (PAN), Aguascalientes state secretary for the political promotion of women, proposed to train women leaders and increase their political participation within the party and local government. As part of her project, Medina has organized trainings for PAN women in state congressional and municipal posts to improve their strategic planning, negotiation, working group decision making and delegation skills.

Through her project, Medina has successfully created a working group of 35 elected women members of city councils throughout the state of Aguascalientes. This Council for PAN Women Municipal Officials (*Consejo de*

³ 2005 Leadership Program follow-on activities in Mexico are funded by the CEPPSII cooperative agreement number 523-A-00-04-00063-00, "Mexico: Increasing the Responsiveness of Mexican Political Parties."

Funcionarias Publicas) recently became a legal entity. On June 4, NDI media expert Miguel Medina conducted the second in a two-part series of message development and media management workshops for the group of 35 women leaders.

IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Objective: Party strengthening projects implemented by LP participants achieve intended results.

- Through her party strengthening project, Alma Medina met her goal of training women leaders in the state of Aguascalientes. Through a two-part series of workshops with NDI, women leaders and council members were able to improve their message development and media management skills.

Objective: Participants and their projects effect long-term changes in party structures and practices.

- Alma Medina's Leadership Program party strengthening project has resulted in the creation of a legal entity, a Council for PAN Women Municipal Officials, providing a venue for increased empowerment and the interchange of ideas and experiences among PAN women leaders in the state of Aguascalientes.

Objective: Foster a new generation of reform-minded political party leaders who can develop a network of mutual support and expertise.

- The reunion of 2005 LP participants with LP alumni created a forum where emerging leaders from different parties were able to exchange ideas and lessons learned while implementing party reform projects.
- As part of this reunion, 2004 PAN participant Alma Medina shared project results and implementation tips with 2005 participants and other LP alumni.
- At the Lima seminar, 2004 PAN participant Patricia Flores shared communication and constituency outreach skills that she developed while implementing her Leadership Program project with 2005 LP participants.

V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS

This quarter, NDI conducted fewer follow-on activities with 2004 Leadership Program participants due to preparations for the 2005 LP seminar in Lima, Peru. NDI did, however, seek opportunities for collaboration between 2004 and 2005 participants, particularly with regard to the exchange of information and lessons learned by 2004 participants while implementing their projects. Several 2004 LP participants have been promoted since participating in the 2004 seminar and reported having difficulties in implementing their projects due to time constraints. For example, Nallely Gutiérrez (PRI) was promoted to technical secretary to the deputy

coordinator of the PRI parliamentary group and Margarita Garmendia (PAN) accepted a position as the executive director of the Miguel Estrada Iturbide Foundation of the PAN.

By consolidating its field presence in Mexico City, NDI has had greater contact with Leadership Program participants from all years, with the parties directly, and with Mexican civil society organizations implementing similar programs. Through its field office, NDI will continue to look for opportunities to facilitate multi-year and multi-party contacts amongst current and former Leadership Program participants.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

During the next quarter, NDI hopes to conduct final project activities with the 2004 Leadership Program participants. NDI will also look for opportunities to further consolidate the projects of LP alumni that continue to work in the area of party reform. In particular, NDI hopes to consolidate initiatives to increase the political participation of women.